

# The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

## Proposal 79-21

(Voting Units: Academic)

**PROPOSAL:** Update Faculty Handbook Section 5.1.2. Exceptional Extension of the Probationary Period

**Submitted by** Provost's Office

### **Rationale for Proposal**

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused substantial disruptions in many aspects of University life. During spring semester 2020, faculty members at Michigan Tech were notified that they could make use of the existing language in the *Faculty Handbook, Appendix I, Section 5.1.2* to request a one-year extension of the tenure clock.

As the pandemic and its associated disruptions have now entered a second year, it has become apparent that there is a need to update *Section 5.1.2* to allow for at least one additional year of extension. The proposed change would also bring this section of the faculty handbook into alignment with *Section 5.1.1 Extension of the Probationary Period*, which states that the probationary period can be extended for not more than 2 years total.

### **Current Text with Proposed Changes Indicated**

#### **5.1.2. Exceptional Extension of the Probationary Period**

Exceptional circumstances may sometimes effect a prolonged disruption of professional responsibilities during the tenure probationary period, requiring extensive sick leave, unpaid leave, or substantial formal reduction of professional responsibilities. A faculty member encountering such circumstances may request a one-year extension of the tenure probationary period. The Committee on Academic Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment considers all such requests and makes a recommendation to the Provost on each.

This request should be made within a reasonable period of time following the period of exceptional circumstances, and in no case after November 15 of the final year of the tenure probationary period. It should be accompanied by a recommendation from the cognizant department chair and the dean of the college, or from the dean of the cognizant school. The request should clearly demonstrate that both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- i. the exceptional circumstances requiring the extension were such that normal conduct of professional responsibilities could not reasonably be expected;
- ii. exclusive of the period of exceptional circumstances, the faculty member had made reasonable progress toward achieving tenure.

Notification of the final decision in each case will be made in writing to the faculty member, department chair, and dean by the Provost who has the sole discretion to approve such extensions. Application for extension of the tenure probationary period does not extend the period. The faculty member's original probationary period will continue to apply unless an extension of the probationary period is granted.

An individual's tenure probationary period at Michigan Technological University may be extended by only one year **per request, for up to a maximum of two years total**, regardless of the combination of circumstances.

## **Proposed Revised Text**

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